

Washington, DC – Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA-2) today announced that Calhoun County will receive a \$75,000 grant through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, part of the Department of Justice. The grant will allow Calhoun County to offer at-risk youth an opportunity to be mentored by senior citizens.

“I believe that any program that helps our at-risk youth is a necessity,” said Congressman Bishop. “I am especially thrilled that this program connects youth with senior citizens. I am reminded of the phrase, ‘I wish that when I was younger, I knew what I know now,’ and I think how lucky these kids are to have this opportunity. Our seniors can teach our young people so much about life, making safe choices, and community history. This is a great opportunity for mentorship, and I am proud to have worked to ensure this grant for Calhoun County.”

The program also allows Family Connection the opportunity to assess each family of these youth and direct them to local and regional resources that will assist them in becoming a more stable family while encouraging these children to succeed in school.

The objectives include:

1. Reduce the number of times these youth are referred for discipline;
2. Reduce the number of unexcused school absences for these youth;
3. Increase the overall grade averages for these youth; and
4. Increase parental involvement (parents of youth in program) in these youths' academic and social life.

“If we start early and get parents involved in kids' lives in and out of school, we not only cut down on crime and drop-out rates, but we improve family life, as well,” said Congressman Bishop. “When our families are strong, our community is strong, and we have a great opportunity to strengthen family and community ties.”

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